

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 02085 051910Z

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6501

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINS, MILI, NU

SUBJECT: FURTHER REPORT OF ALLEGED AMERICAN MERCENARIES IN NICARAGUA

REF: MANAGUA 2011

1. MANAGUA DAILY LA PRENSA OF MAY 3 CARRIED SECOND BUT MORE LENGTHY FRONT-PAGE REPORT ON PRESENCE OF US "MERCENARIES" IN NICARAGUA BASED UPON INFORMATION FROM INDE PRESIDENT MANUEL JOSE TORRES (PARA 2 REFTEL). ARTICLE PROVIDES DETAILS SIMILAR TO LA PRENSA'S APRIL 30 REPORT (PARA 1 REFTEL), BUT ADDED THAT "MERCENARY" HAD SPOKEN IN VERY PPOR SPANISH. "WHEN TORRES RESPONDED IN ENGLISH, THE MERCENARY ACTED AS IF HE HAD BEEN FOUND OUT AND TURNED THE INTERROGATION OVER TO OTHER NATIONAL GUARDSMEN." ARTILCE ALSO CLAIMS THAT "MERCENARY" WAS DRESSED IN UNIFORM OF THE NATIONAL GUARD (GN).

2. THE REPORT STATED THAT TORRES HAD BOTH INFORMED AND PROTESTED TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR THE PRESENCE OF NORTH AMERICAN "MERCENARIES" IN NICARAGUA AND THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAS RESPONDED THAT

THE SITUATION IS BEING REVIEWED BY THE EMBASSY. THE ARTICLE QUOTES TORRES AS SAYING THAT HE BELIEVES THAT THE EVENT CONSTITUTES AN ACT OF INTERVENTION AND THAT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY SHOULD MAKE A BASIC FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW OF THE SITUATION.

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3. THE ARTICLE, REFERRING TO PRIVATE SECTOR SOURCES, SAYS THAT "THE ATTITUDE AGAINST THE PRESIDENT OF INDE (TORRES) IS INTERPRETED AS EVIDENCE OF AGGRESSION AGAINST THE WORK OF INDE AND FUNDE, WHOSE PROMOTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN THREATENED BEFORE." ARTICLE THEN DEVOTES FINAL PARAGRAPHS TO US EMPHASIS ON CHANNELING FOREIGN ASSISTANCE THROUGH PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS AND CRITICIZES "GOVERNMENTS" AND "BUREAUCRACIES" AS BEING LESS EFFICIENT

THAN THE PVOS.

4. NOVEDADES OF MAY 5 CARRIES INSIDE PAGE CARTOON RIDICULING TORRES FOR APPARENTLY NOT REALIZING THAT THERE ARE BLUE-EYED BLOND CAMPESINOS IN THE NORTH, AND THAT ON THE ATLANTIC COAST THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE THAT SPEAK ONLY ENGLISH.

5. COMMENT: AMBASSADOR DID IN FACT MEET WITH TORRES AND HEARD HIS EXPOSITION OF HIS RUN-IN WITH THE "AMERICAN MERCENARY". TORRES ALSO SAID PEOPLE FREQUENTLY ARE LISTENING TO GN BROADCASTS AND HEAR A GREAT DEAL OF COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH (THE EMBASSY AND GN FREQUENCIES ARE VERY CLOSE). THE IMPORTANCE OF TORRES' STORY ISN'T IN WHETHER HE REALLY DID HAVE A RUN-IN WITH ONE OF THE U.S. CITIZENS WORKING FOR THE GN, BUT THAT NICARAGUANS BELIEVE NOT ONLY THAT THERE ARE U.S. "MERCENARIES" BUT THAT THERE ARE SCORES OR HUNDREDS OF THEM.
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